

Briefing on Truck Convoy Demonstrations
1 February 2022

Board Members: D. Deans, B. Johnson (late), R. King, C. Meehan, D. Nirman, L.A. Smallwood, R. Swaita

Service Members: S. Bell, P. Sloly, J. Steinbachs

Other: K. Ferraro, H. Logan

Chief Sloly Opened the meeting:

- Not a lot of change since yesterday afternoon
- Numbers continue to decline, risks remain the same
- One convoy south of the boarder that diverted to Washington – more info that this is becoming international, leading to risks remaining the same if not increasing
- Some resources have returned to GTA, but more resources retained from Peel, Hamilton and OPP
- More specific requests to OPP and RCMP
- Looking at options and planning options
- Pivot from pure demonstration, somewhere between a demonstration and an occupation
- Decision cycle – whether we go back into demonstration on weekend and occupation during the week... One of many options we could look at, but all options have risks and resource requirements. No options will please everyone.
- Other factor to consider is burn out of our members – won't say that is our number one issue, the safety of the city is, but this is the near second concern. Need to get them there rest while retaining operation capacity.
- Other pivot around freeing up resources during the week, like NRT members, and having crime prevention officers working with and being with residents and businesses most affected by the demonstrations.

Acting Deputy Chief Trish Ferguson

- Queen to the south, elgin to the east, bay street ot the west – that is where the majority are parked. We have been able ot open up a couple of lanes – at least one, and we are working on further from there. Able to open up the Chaudiere bridge, a great relief to our neighbours.
- We are starting to see our footprint shrink in terms of areas with the jams. Kent Street remains an area where trucks are coming off the Queensway. We had 300+ personal vehicles tying up that area. Our NRTs are going to be making

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themselves visible in the market and Centretown as much as possible in the coming days. Mentions an issue with a daycare where a driver was honking in front, the truck was moved. Unfortunately it takes times for our officers to get to all of those calls, but we are making progress. The negotiation team is working 24/7 and is manning two phones per person.

- Just came from a provincial meeting with intelligence from the command. We are getting the best information to feed our decisions on this. We get a little relief with support from other Services, and that will allow us to relocate some members. We will then start to reestablish a law and order posture. Our traffic people have been working flat out since last Thursday. We need to make sure our people are rested, have everyone put their best foot forward.

DC Bell

- We've set up a joint intelligence program, as soon as this started on the west coast the RCMP was engaged. OPP took over once they entered Ontario. We have a regional command centre now that has all of those intelligence assets with it. Providing real time live updates to our incident command centre. We are keeping our eye on higher profile speeches in the coming days, as well as activities from the fringe groups – we are tracking them, one was arrested today for threats against a public figure. We are tracking the US Convoy, we were concerned, but it appears to be going to Washington DC. Better than coming here, but it is raising the profile of the demonstrations. We continue to track weekend activities. WE expect an upswing over the weekend, some will be coming back as pedestrians and others as convoys.
- We have a hate crime hotline and a criminal code offense hotline. We have had 13 criminal code investigations to date. From that, two arrests. We have had 3 hate crimes investigations including the mischief to the tomb of the unknown soldier, which is ongoing.

John Steinbachs – Comms update

- There has been a huge coms component – nationally, internationally, locally, trying to give the most up to date information to members of the public. There has been some progress. The reality is that CEntretown is the most diverse neighbourhood in the City and there is a group of people that is the opposite of that trying to disrupt it. Massive amount of communications required. Putting out messages. We have a presentation to Council tomorrow where we will run through the current situation and the go-forward, as well as concerns for the

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weekend. We have brought in extra help from a consulting firm to assist us. It is a bit like being in quicksand – we are trying to keep our heads above water.

- Misinformation is a big issue – there was an image of police bringing food to the demonstrators. Having elected officials undermine policing is not helpful one bit. We have direct communication with members of council to try and get the info they require asap.

Chief Sloly

- Hopefully this is alleviating some concerns -to be clear, we aren't providing any supplies to anyone involved in the demonstrations unless someone's life depends on it – i.e. If they are severely dehydrated. Our officers know to be mindful of any expression of potential solidarity with either side of the demonstrations, but they have been trying to coordinate and communicate with people who are not inclined to cooperate with police. If giving a thumbs up stops a confrontation, I will support our officers in that.
- Any misconduct reported will be immediately investigated.

QUESTION PERIOD

Q: Question re: PLT

A: Police Liaison Team – expanded it over the last summer, training is from the OPP and largely related to indigenous protests, but we will put these people in in any demonstration situation. We have somewhere upwards of 20 plus members trained in it.

Q: Can you take action if a truck is left idling outside of a residence? Ideally we wouldn't have these trucks in residential areas, but that is something else

A: Lower period of intensity now, so we are able to free up our NRT teams to address those nuisance issues. We had one member negotiate with a truck to move and stop idling near a daycare. We are putting in place resources of support that might be able to enforce bylaws. Still high risk, but freeing up resources. I have asked Steve to follow up on criminal investigations, to see if we can follow up in charging people after the fact, especially as we are talking about people from all parts of the country. We are acting on the ones that we can in the short term.

Escalation of charges that we could engage in – but depends on how we prioritize based on crowd dynamics.

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Q: I did not hear you mention the assault on a resident of the Shepherds – is that an investigation underway?

A: Yes, absolutely. It is one of the more complicated ones. It was reported to us by the shelter staff, it took some time to locate the victim in the matter. We are locating him and getting a statement from him so we can locate the perpetrator. Not straight forward.

Q: In previous demonstrations, one rationale for moving somewhat forcefully was that in the past, if demonstrators block critical or crucial intersections, actions are taken to remove them. I know this is a different dynamic situation. But we know that the next time there is some kind of event, the public will refer back to your handling of this demonstration. I don't know where and how we Previously, a blocked intersection resulted in police moving people. Many intersections are blocked....

A: There are massive differences between all protests. We never were able to establish any level of communication with any organizer of the last protest. People went forward to councillors and the board but not with police. In this one, we do have a level of negotiation ongoing with some organizers. The level of ability for us to negotiate with core organizers is critical. The size, scale and nature should be obvious. People saying this is white and others were black and indigenous – that is not the case, there is a diverse crowd. There are racists. But there are diverse crowds.

Q: Pick up on something the Chief said – officer burnout – are OPS still using the reserve deployment strategy?

A: It has actually been a good model for us on this one – those folks on reserve have been brought in to strictly staff the demonstration. The 20 per cent during the day/ 20 per cent afternoon / 20 per cent night is working. We aren't keeping them home, but we are relying on a similar strategy. Very manageable right now.

Q: long hours – is that normal

A: it is not normal but we are using all our members – no one is sitting at home. Our traffic staff is at 53 per cent as a result of a number of retirements and acting positions throughout. They are specialized in what we need in a demonstration like this – we need them in play to make sure that traffic is held and that people are safe. As we progress, we will switch them out and get them rested.

Q: Can we set up a perimeter to keep people out of the core this coming weekend

A: that was a topic of conversation this afternoon – what our legal rights are to limit people from coming into the city – can we stop them from getting off the highway? We cannot stop people from travelling within the city, our plan will continue to develop

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depending on if what we have is sufficient for the weekend. The bigger the footprint, the more resources we are going to need.

Q: Can we have them park somewhere else and shuttle them into downtown?

A: That is part of the negotiation process – we did have a number of people park in a park and provided them with transportation options. Part of the give and take we employ. With snow coming, we know we will need to move heavy equipment that we had blocking roads.

Q: Wondering if you could give a sense of the complement strength going back into neighbourhoods, seems we are getting into a scenario where we may need de-escalation with residents who are counter protesting. What is the complement strength of people returning to neighbourhoods? How are you deescalating residents?

A: We have released the NRTs, the CPOs, we've given direction within the zones of the protests – those officers to participate in what you've referenced.

A: We have released the market and centretown NRTs to be redeployed to their regular tasks, about 30 officers of 96 in the NRTs. We have our CPOs, who have remained in their positions and were aware and engaged in the demonstrations but they are more flexible. They continue to be in touch with the BIAs and the Councillors in their areas to make sure that residents' concerns are being addressed. We cannot return all our NRTs to their positions, but at our briefings we are asking officers that instead of just holding intersections they are also being deployed into businesses and hotels – they check in to see if there is anything those people need in terms of support.

Q: How are we looking at enhancing communications? As a councillor, I am giving people remedial lessons in civics about what councillors are able to do – is there a tool we can use to give a clearer sense of the process around protests and who has the authority to end protests, and how citizens might want to conduct themselves in these types of scenarios.

A: We do actually have info on rights and responsibilities for demonstrators but I will say that this is an obnoxious group of individuals. We are communicating that, I can share it with you

Q: More communications with residents rather than with demonstrators

A: I will send that over too – but it still leaves the question of what to do with some of the individuals

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Q: Snowstorm impact on the demonstration site – will inclement weather dampen the protests?

A: I think it may limit amount of people we have driving around, but does add a layer of complication if we have vehicles parked in areas where they shouldn't be... We are hopeful that it will limit the enthusiasm, we are tracking a large number of people indicating that they are coming. A small group under 10 are coming from out west – driving through the storm. There is a certain amount of commitment we are seeing.

Q: ETA for charges – you mentioned part three of the provincial offenses act – if there are charges how long will be waiting?

A: You will shortly see a news release on a series of charges being laid today, as soon as we can investigate identify and lay a charge, they will go out – we aren't going to wait to have a bunch. As soon as we can charge, we will. In terms of Part 3 idling or blocking a highway charge, we will look at that down the road, don't be looking for that yet – we are looking to progress to later.

Q: If there was legal authority issued around a court order for removal, what would the threshold be for removing trucks and people? Large conglomerate of people and vehicles...

A: Trish indicated earlier on that we had a number of OPP commanders involved with previous occupation events, consistently what we are hearing – an injunction is an option on the table. Everyone we have spoken to, we are not feeling that an injunction is the best way to go – clear indication that injunction might be the worst way to go. We will keep all options on the table and will be able to justify using or not using them.

Q: Location of trucks, getting individuals into the core rather than having trucks come into the core – the baseball stadium is being leveraged, and the trucks aren't there for longterm stay, but can you shed more light on how resources like that will continue to be used

A: Don't have all the details on overflow spots – I think we are using them less and less, but is it possible we will see another peak over the weekend, I think it is. I can endeavor to find answers to this.

Q: A lot of politicians have weighed in about dismantling the protest – who has that authority

A: We will have Christiane weigh in on this, but my short answer is no body. The authority is with the protestors, they can choose to go. There are authorities that as Chief of police I have to intervene in their protests, but I do not have unlimited resources

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and can only use use of force tactics in specific circumstances. I can only intervene with forces if I have sufficient information to believe an offence has taken place, believe that there is a reasonable prospect of conviction, and none of the interference will cause more damage than what I am preventing. A lot of my decisions are based on board priorities, mood of the crowd, etc. There are other options well beyond my ability. The Mayor can declare a state of emergency, invoke military aid, the prime minister could reverse the border mandates.... The singular power to end a demonstration does not lay with anyone.

Christiane: What the chief was getting at is the weight of the charter – public protests are a valuable feature of the Canadian society. It is important to emphasize that protests need be peacefully lawfully and safely. The role of the police has to be a measured approach – everyone is saying oh should the police just go in and end this protest? It is in the hands of the protesters. The police need to consider the rights of the protesters under the charter and balance that with the safety of the society. Who can end it? Peacefully, it should be the protesters. IF the police get involved, it is not as easy as just ticketing everyone and removing them, we have to respect their charter rights. It is not a quick fix. We are trying to look at the rights of the protesters with the rights of the community.

Chief: More thoughtful about the question, provide a clear and convincing response to it – Christiane and I will take it away. The difference here, the decisions of protesters here – my decisions are having an impact on demonstrations across the country. The US is seeing demonstrations occur stemming from this one. Good or bad, it is going to have provincial/national/international consequences. It is a global pandemic, creating a national protest, where whatever they do and whatever we do will have international impacts. Very different scenario than what we saw in November 2020.

Q: Can you put boundaries? Protect their right to protest, but limit where they can go?

A: Very little – there have been attempts to compare this demonstration to others. Sometimes we can predict and mitigate risks, but sometimes we get no information. This makes the risks go up exponentially. Unless they are entering private property, and the owner of the property does not consent to them being there, there is little we can do.

A: Christiane – exclusion zones, established in case law, common law principle where police can establish no go zones, but they have to be as small as possible and remain in place as briefly as possible. To say the no go zone is all of Ottawa, that would not be sustainable.

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Q: does the Chief or anyone in the command team have access to the Prime Minister?

A lot of grievances being expressed are related to mandates, globally mandates are unwinding, I am assuming that Canada will follow suit in due time. Can we work with the prime minister to negotiate that? Maybe we can do that collectively – are we trying to find some sort of solution

A: I can understand the logic and the practicality behind the question, I stand to be corrected, but my short answer is no. That would mean me (CHIEF) asking the mayor to invoke his authority into a decision that the Board makes around the budget. It would be like me calling the premier and not closing a bridge he would like closed. It would be me influencing political decisions. Ref: to Dudley George incident where Premier was involved with police commissioner and negotiations with protestors, hugely problematic, I would ask Christiane to weigh in. Hugely problematic, very limited.

Q: Do we have the ability to call back retired officers for assistance.

A: No – they would have to be sworn in, we have auxiliary police officers that can be given additional powers, we aren't there yet though and it would be very risky. That is probably something to be considered.

Q: Are we still incurring \$800,000 a day?

A: Yes, we are estimating 700,000-800,000 a day. We have a total cost running at 2.57 million that we have received invoices for and have input from Friday through Monday. Canada Day is around \$620,000. The costs will accumulate quickly. The feds give us 3 million. We will blow through that in the coming days. I understand 120 additional OPP officers will be joining, but this will ramp up costs even further. I would expect that the federal gov would offset these costs, it will have to be negotiated.

John: EXTREMELY early estimate – there are many bills and invoices not yet in, we are just trying to give you an example of where we are headed. There are bills that we do not even know about yet still coming in.

Q: Could we have mediation? Maybe politicians like the councillors on the board, etc, could coordinate this

A: Maybe one we need to take away – I suspect the answer will be no, but Christiane will consider it. It is fraught with risks – this is highly polarized. The politics at play are plain for everyone to see. It is making things more polarized rather than less polarized.

Q:

A: We discussed that at the last meeting, had two lead police liaison officers in the room, asked if they could use the support of more trained mediators. We have more

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trained negotiators in the service, we do have other experts in the RCMP and OPP, we are considering external resources as well. We have a very good cadre of crisis management, we have members trained in that, I have put them in touch with the PLT members, and they can help with things like tips and tools. It is a two week training program. They are very well versed in what's legal, etc. If we need other negotiators that would be our next step.

Q: If these protestors are anti police, maybe other mediators would be a good option to call upon. Is there any further way we can support the officers? Providing psychologists?

A: Right now, rest is what most of these folks need. I think that is where we are at right now. It is not so much psychological trauma being inflicted, rather the intensity of the interactions that people are having. When you are tired, these things obviously can take you off guard. This week has been good from a stabilizing perspective as we are calling in for some help.

Chief: There is a lot of disinformation going on, and some of that is being contributed to poorly informed councillor messages. I would encourage the three elected officials on the board to help with our message. You offered to do peer to peer work with your other elected officials on council, I encourage that. The provincial appointees can leverage their networks too. This is an opportunity to dispel and dissuade disinformation from spreading in scale and complexity.

Q: Lot of difficulties in healthcare delivery in Ottawa, impact on healthcare workers, those that live in the area aren't getting enough sleep. Healthcare staff are having difficulty coming into the region. Is there anything else that can be suggested to help healthcare workers?

A: Steve Bell – phone call with all the hospital CEOs in 9 minutes, I will be happy to update on that after the meeting.

Q: I forwarded to John just a minute ago an Instagram post that talked about the Ottawa Convoy, because people are feeling scared and harassed. There is a page offering support for people feeling that way and offering support

A: If they are real, we are going to contact them and encourage they move to reporting to police, and if they aren't real we will report them.

Q: Do you see any role for OPH to reduce the risk of covid to demonstrators? I know the audience is not receptive to this... I just thought I would ask

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A: We have barely talked about the covid impact of this demonstration, whereas before we were always very mindful of covid in past demonstrations. We have not had the chance to build any of that in. (said Chief)

Steve: We have had discussions on this, but the group is not receptive. I would be hesitant to put OPH staff in the group. We have been yelled at for wearing masks in the rideau centre. They do not embrace the idea of covid safety, not much opening to try and make them healthier or safer.

Q: Can we review what the plan is to update the Board members as changes and updates are available

A: It is an important question, we are open to any ideas and suggestions within governance directions around the timing and nature of updates, but every one of these takes time and effort to plan and to spend time in. We are just asking to balance your need for information with our need to time to be able to operationally plan. We are open to more or different engagements.

Chair: I know they are working around the clock and are exhausted, I also recognize we need to be in the know as the oversight body, so I am trying to make sure that that is what we are doing. Last week I sent a written update because it is efficient. I don't want to overtax the service any more than they already are. Maybe we move to writing. I know we wanted an update today, so we got one, but please be mindful that when we do this we are taking resources away from their key initiatives.

Q: Residents don't want to hear that protesters will leave on their own time. Is the OPS working on Coms strategy on communicating this?

A: We will take this away – I am sure John is already putting his mind to this, some sort of FAQ infographic we could provide to the public that explains the legal framework on how demonstrations work legally speaking and who is responsible for what – maybe there is something that has been developed. I would suspect that the vast majority of people won't read it, those that do won't understand it, but we will put our minds to it. Everybody needs to be careful. We don't want a level of response that will make things more complicated. If we openly presented information suggesting that anyone was going to invoke something like military aid that would ratchet up a lot of concerns. Declaring a state of emergency may not be as problematic, but we aren't near that threshold. All of these things can reduce stress and risk but could also increase stress and risk. All options are on the table.

Q: Something has to be done – I am hearing from our racialized communities –

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A: let me be clear – we are asking these protesters to leave. We have been trying to do so since the beginning. We need these people to leave – how can we facilitate their departures.

Q: Can we mitigate the noise at night? Ticket the trucks honking at night?

A: I have been in contact with commissioner lucky (Alberta) what is happening at the Coots border has no real reflection to the complexity of what is happening here. There are 245 people living in Coots. People are going to say things that the RCMP can move the trucks out of Coots, etc etc. This is not Coots this is Ottawa. The meeting we had before now was to look at every option from a long term multi month operation to an enforcement operation of removing everyone. I will have a full plan in the coming days, and we will start to make decisions based on that.

Chief: we cannot negotiate with crowds as large as this – for the most part, the noise is not from the convoys but rather with the many individuals downtown participating. We run the risk of inflaming a violent response. We have limited ability to stop the noise at this point.

Q: How do we get the senior command some breaks?

A: We are going to have to get that in place, it is day 8 for me and likely longer than that for Trish. We aren't as taxed as the frontline, but we are taxed. We will need to rotate. We are at a critical juncture right now. We need a pivot for the weekend. We need a plan, no days off until at least Sunday. IF someone NEEDS rest, they will get it, but this is the challenge.

Chair: anger downtown is peaking, they feel ignored, I heard you say that we will start enforcing some, but you didn't say which?

A: I think first and foremost the noise is the issue – running engines, honking, weve seen posts where people are encouraging members of the convoy to honk for 10 minutes of every 30. We have seen that subside a little bit. We are first going to survey residential areas; it will be a measured approach.

Concluded – 6:17 p.m.